

**Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Boundary Study
Mission Survey and Comment Sheet - December, 2005**

The preamble and purpose of the 1998 Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District order state:

The Avon Hill neighborhood is characterized by 19th and early 20th century residences of significant architectural quality sited in a cohesive pedestrian-oriented neighborhood of pleasant streetscapes with little automobile traffic, abundant mature trees and plantings, and vistas through to surrounding properties. The Avon Hill neighborhood contains National Register-listed properties of city-wide significance and is marked by the diversity of its turn-of-the-century architectural design and by the evolution of that architecture as subsequent owners have updated properties. The generous size of the neighborhood's lots and buildings contains substantial scope for subdivision, new construction, and additions which could alter or diminish the qualities and characteristics that render the neighborhood an attractive and desirable place in which to live. It is therefore recommended that an Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District be established for the following purposes.

The purpose of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District (the "District") is to preserve, conserve and protect the beauty and heritage of the District's architecture and landscape, to improve the quality of its environment, to establish a process for accommodating changes to properties in the District, to ensure that additions and alterations to properties are compatible with the character of the District, to offer a forum for neighborhood dialogue about changes to properties in the District, to provide technical assistance to District property owners on issues of conservation and preservation, to foster wider public appreciation of the District, and to promote the public welfare by making the District a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.

Expectations:

Given the preamble and purpose statement above, what are your expectations about what the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) should "preserve, conserve and protect" in the neighborhood? Please indicate the level of importance of *each* of the following elements of the district to you.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. 19 th and early 20 th century residences of significant architectural quality	3	2	1
2. cohesive pedestrian-oriented neighborhood of pleasant streetscapes with little auto traffic	3	2	1
3. abundant, mature trees and plantings and vistas through to surrounding properties ("green space")	3	2	1
4. National Register-listed properties of city-wide significance	3	2	1
5. diversity of architectural design	3	2	1
6. evolution of architectural design through later updating	3	2	1
7. potential impacts on the district's generously-sized lots and buildings of:			
a. subdivision and new construction	3	2	1
b. large additions and accessory buildings*	3	2	1
*accessory buildings include garages, sheds, etc.			
c. small additions and accessory buildings	3	2	1
d. lesser alterations such as replacement windows, fences, or front yard parking	3	2	1

Experiences:

What has been your experience of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District?

1. Contact with Avon Hill NCD

-Have you received notice of an Avon Hill NCD meeting or hearing? Y N

-Have you attended an Avon Hill NCD meeting or hearing?	Y	N
-Have you applied for approval of a project in the Avon Hill NCD?	Y	N

2. Interactions with Avon Hill NCD

If you have attended one or more Avon Hill NCD meetings or hearings, as an applicant or otherwise, what was your experience? The following reflect some of the comments the Study Committee has received about the District; please indicate whether you agree or disagree, based on your experience.

-the mission and standards of the District review were clear	Y	N	NA
-the Commission applied those principles consistently or non-binding, and what that meant in its decision-making	Y	N	NA
-the focus of the District review remained consistent during review	Y	N	NA
-a distinction was made between binding and non-binding reviews	Y	N	NA
-a distinction was made between reviews of National Register and non-National Register-listed properties	Y	N	NA
-efforts were made to persuade or encourage applicants to adopt alternatives in non-binding cases	Y	N	NA
-in the aggregate, the Commission conducted a fair and civil hearing	Y	N	NA

Results:

The following are some of the purposes for which the District was established in 1998. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree that the District has fulfilled these purposes, based on your experience.

-the District has “preserved, conserved and protected” the character of the neighborhood from inappropriate alteration	Y	N
-the District has accommodated changes to properties in ways compatible with Avon Hill’s distinctive character	Y	N
-the District has provided a positive forum for neighborhood dialogue about changes to properties	Y	N
-the District has provided technical assistance to owners on issues of conservation and preservation	Y	N

Open Response: Please include your own responses or comments about the Avon Hill NCD.

Please return your survey to the Cambridge Historical Commission, 831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139 by Wednesday, January 11, 2006. Thank you for your assistance!

Responses to this Survey are confidential. If you would like to identify yourself to the Study Committee, please indicate your name and address below.
